

Notice from the Executive Officer: Changes to the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program Funding of Opioid Medications

July 20, 2016

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (“ministry”) will be implementing changes to the reimbursement of opioid medications under the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program as part of the **January 2017 Formulary update**. Please read this document in its entirety, as it contains important information pertaining to a number of ODB Formulary listing changes.

The inappropriate use, abuse, and diversion of prescription narcotics has emerged as a significant public health and safety issue in Canada and other jurisdictions around the world. After the transition from OxyContin as a Limited Use benefit to OxyNEO reimbursement through the Exceptional Access Program (EAP), the ministry made a commitment to review the funding status of the other opioid medications and make changes as necessary to improve and encourage appropriate prescribing. For this purpose, a Pain Medication Formulary Review Subcommittee (the Pain subcommittee) was convened to conduct a class review of narcotic medications prescribed for pain management. Members included clinical experts in pain, addiction, palliative care, clinical pharmacology, internal medicine, family practice, and pharmacy.

Based on extensive discussions with the Pain subcommittee as well as further consideration of their recommendations by Ontario’s Committee to Evaluate Drugs (CED) and a detailed analysis of opioid utilization trends, the ministry will implement the following changes, that will take effect with the January 2017 ODB Formulary update:

- **Higher strengths of long-acting opioids will be de-listed from the ODB Formulary:**
 - **Morphine 200 mg tablets;**
 - **Hydromorphone 24 mg and 30 mg capsules;**
 - **Fentanyl 75 mcg/hr and 100 mcg/hr patches; and**
- **Meperidine 50 mg tablets will be de-listed from the ODB Formulary.**

For the list of affected DINs, please consult Table 1 below.

Table 1: Products that will be de-listed from the ODB Formulary effective with the January 2017 Formulary update

DRUG NAME	DRUG IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (DIN)	MANUFACTURER
MS Contin 200 mg SR Tab	02014327	Purdue Pharma
Novo-morphine SR 200 mg	02302802	Novopharm
M-Eslon 200 mg ER Cap	02177757	Ethypharm Inc.
Hydromorph Contin 24 mg	02125382	Purdue Pharma
Hydromorph Contin 30 mg	02125390	Purdue Pharma
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02314657	Apotex
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02386887	Cobalt
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02396734	Mylan
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02341409	Pharmascience
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02330148	Ranbaxy
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02327155	Sandoz
Fentanyl transdermal patch 75 mcg	02282976	Teva
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02314665	Apotex
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02386895	Cobalt
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02396742	Mylan
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02341417	Pharmascience
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02330156	Ranbaxy
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02327163	Sandoz
Fentanyl transdermal patch 100 mcg	02282984	Teva
Demerol 50 mg tab	02138018	Sanofi Aventis Pharma

There will be no consideration of de-listed products under EAP or through the Compassionate Review Policy (CRP). The notification of these changes is being made at this time, with over 6 months in advance notice prior to implementation, to provide adequate time for patients to consult with their physicians regarding required changes to their drug therapy. Physicians should initiate this discussion as soon as possible with any patients affected by these changes.

The ministry is committed to continuing to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of narcotics and to bringing forward further modernization in funding under the ODB Program to reduce the risk of addiction and death resulting from the abuse, misuse, and diversion of these products.

Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

If you require further clarification or have questions regarding this matter, please send your question(s) to PublicDrugPrgrms.moh@ontario.ca or call the telephone numbers provided below.

For pharmacies:

Please call the ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641

For all other Health Care Providers and the Public:

Please call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY at 416-327-4282.